



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 30, 2018

TO: Inspector General, Assistant Inspectors General and
Deputy Assistant Inspectors General

FROM: Scott Levine
Associate Counsel / OIG FOIA Officer

SUBJECT: Freedom of Information Act Request (EPA-HQ-2019-001558)

The Office of Counsel received the attached FOIA request and needs your assistance in identifying and forwarding responsive documents. *OIG Procedure 502: Freedom of Information Act, Privacy Act, Congressional and News Media Requests for Documents* requires that you or your designee direct a comprehensive and thorough search for hard copy and electronic files (including emails) within your office and from your staff. The search should be conducted in all logical and reasonable locations and should be sent to all staff that may have responsive records. If you have any questions as to what may be potentially released, please contact me by phone or email.

Within **five working days of this memo**,

1. Please forward the responsive documents in **electronic format** to the Office of Counsel. Please have your designated staff person load the responsive material in your folder under G:\OIG-FOIA.
2. If you have any concern about the **release** of any specific material in the responsive records, please identify that material and provide an explanation.
3. If your office needs additional time to search for records or if you are unable to provide the records in an electronic format, please contact me as soon as possible. If your search requires more than two hours, please contact the FOIA Officer before continuing.

Note: Current Government-wide policy requires all agencies to interpret FOIA requests as broadly as possible. In the spirit of transparency, please include all potentially responsive documents for consideration. If you are uncertain about how to interpret a request, please contact me.

FROM: Inspector General, Assistant Inspectors General and
Deputy Assistant Inspectors General

TO: Scott Levine
Associate Counsel / OIG FOIA Officer

I have reviewed the attached FOIA request and hereby certify that:

- ☐ I have forwarded an electronic copy of all responsive OIG records from my office;
- ☐ I located responsive records generated by non-OIG EPA offices and have forwarded those records electronically to OC for referral to the Agency;
- ☐ My office has no responsive records for this request;
- ☐ Other: _____

Additionally, I hereby certify that the following systems were searched:

- ☐ IGEMS
- ☐ Lotus Notes / Outlook
- ☐ Chron Files
- ☐ AutoAudit
- ☐ Other System(s) (please list) _____

Are you aware of any other offices that may have responsive documents? If so, please list:

Printed Name

Signature

Date

EPA-HQ-2019-001558 Request Details

Clock Days: 7

Case Phase: Assignment **Case Status:** Assignment Determination **Due Date:** 12/19/2018

Requester Information

Requester	Michael Ravnitzky
Organization	
Requester Has Account	No
Email Address	(b) (6)
Phone Number	(b) (6)
Fax Number	
Address	(b) (6)
City	(b) (6)
State/Province	(b) (6)
Zip Code/Postal Code	(b) (6)
Tracking Number	EPA-HQ-2019-001558
Submitted Date	11/20/2018
Received Date	11/20/2018
Perfected Date	11/20/2018
Last Assigned Date	11/20/2018
Assigned To	Office of the Inspector General
Last Assigned By	Wendy Schumacher (Headquarters)
Request Track	Simple
Fee Limit	\$25.00

Request Handling

Requester Info Available to the Public	Yes ▼
Request Track	Simple ▼
Fee Category	Other ▼
Fee Waiver Requested	No
Fee Waiver Status	
Expedited Processing Requested	No
Expedited Processing Status	
Request Type	FOIA ▼
Request Perfected	Yes ▼
★ Perfected Date	11/20/2018
Acknowledgement Sent Date	

Unusual Circumstances

No

Litigation

No

5 Day Notifications

Description

170/2000

Each report by the EPA Office of Inspector General concerning the closed investigation of (b) (6) during calendar year 2018.

Has Description Been Modified

Description Available to the Public

No

Short Description

Attached Supporting Files

Attachments Available to the Public

No

Attached File Name

Size (MB)

File Type

Remove

No supporting files have been uploaded.

Upload Supporting Files

No supporting files have been uploaded.

Drag files here

Upload Supporting Files



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 30, 2018

TO: Inspector General, Assistant Inspectors General and
Deputy Assistant Inspectors General

FROM: Scott Levine
Associate Counsel / OIG FOIA Officer

SUBJECT: Freedom of Information Act Request (EPA-HQ-2019-001558)

The Office of Counsel received the attached FOIA request and needs your assistance in identifying and forwarding responsive documents. *OIG Procedure 502: Freedom of Information Act, Privacy Act, Congressional and News Media Requests for Documents* requires that you or your designee direct a comprehensive and thorough search for hard copy and electronic files (including emails) within your office and from your staff. The search should be conducted in all logical and reasonable locations and should be sent to all staff that may have responsive records. If you have any questions as to what may be potentially released, please contact me by phone or email.

Within **five working days of this memo**,

1. Please forward the responsive documents in **electronic format** to the Office of Counsel. Please have your designated staff person load the responsive material in your folder under G:\OIG-FOIA.
2. If you have any concern about the **release** of any specific material in the responsive records, please identify that material and provide an explanation.
3. If your office needs additional time to search for records or if you are unable to provide the records in an electronic format, please contact me as soon as possible. If your search requires more than two hours, please contact the FOIA Officer before continuing.

Note: Current Government-wide policy requires all agencies to interpret FOIA requests as broadly as possible. In the spirit of transparency, please include all potentially responsive documents for consideration. If you are uncertain about how to interpret a request, please contact me.

FROM: Inspector General, Assistant Inspectors General and
Deputy Assistant Inspectors General

TO: Scott Levine
Associate Counsel / OIG FOIA Officer

I have reviewed the attached FOIA request and hereby certify that:

(b) (6) I have forwarded an electronic copy of all responsive OIG records from my office;

I located responsive records generated by non-OIG EPA offices and have forwarded those records electronically to OC for referral to the Agency;

My office has no responsive records for this request;

Other: (b) (6)

Additionally, I hereby certify that the following systems were searched:

() IGEMS
() Lotus Notes / Outlook
() Chron Files
() AutoAudit
() Other System(s) (please list) _____

Are you aware of any other offices that may have responsive documents? If so, please list:

(b) (6)
Printed Name

(b) (6)
Signature

12/17/18
Date

EPA-HQ-2019-001558 Request Details

Clock Days: 7

Case Phase: Assignment **Case Status:** Assignment Determination **Due Date:** 12/19/2018

Requester Information

Requester	Michael Ravnitzky
Organization	
Requester Has Account	No
Email Address	(b) (6)
Phone Number	(b) (6)
Fax Number	
Address	(b) (6)
City	(b) (6)
State/Province	(b) (6)
Zip Code/Postal Code	
Tracking Number	EPA-HQ-2019-001558
Submitted Date	11/20/2018
Received Date	11/20/2018
Perfected Date	11/20/2018
Last Assigned Date	11/20/2018
Assigned To	Office of the Inspector General
Last Assigned By	Wendy Schumacher (Headquarters)
Request Track	Simple
Fee Limit	\$25.00

Request Handling

Requester Info Available to the Public	Yes ▼
Request Track	Simple ▼
Fee Category	Other ▼
Fee Waiver Requested	No
Fee Waiver Status	
Expedited Processing Requested	No
Expedited Processing Status	
Request Type	FOIA ▼
Request Perfected	Yes ▼
★ Perfected Date	11/20/2018
Acknowledgement Sent Date	

Unusual Circumstances

No

Litigation

No

5 Day Notifications

Description

170/2000

Each report by the EPA Office of Inspector General concerning the closed investigation of (b) (6) during calendar year 2018.

Has Description Been Modified

Description Available to the Public

No

Short Description

Attached Supporting Files

Attachments Available to the Public

No

Attached File Name

Size (MB)

File Type

Remove

No supporting files have been uploaded.

Upload Supporting Files

No supporting files have been uploaded.

Drag files here

Upload Supporting Files

From: (b) (6)
To: [Levine, Scott](#)
Cc: [Barvenik, Susan](#)
Subject: FIOA 2019-001558
Date: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 11:24:13 AM

Scott,

I put the cover memo on the G drive for this FIOA. (b) (6), (b) (5)

Thanks,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Inspector General

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: [Lewis, Judith](#)
To: [Levine, Scott](#)
Subject: FOIA -- EPA-HQ-2019-000360; EPA-HQ-2019-001558 Michael Ravnitzky re Pending FOIA Requests
Date: Thursday, March 7, 2019 1:50:30 PM
Attachments: [FOIA -- Michael Ravnitzky re Request for Status of Listed FOIA Requests.pdf](#)

Scott – the above noted FOIA requests are being shown as pending in FOIAonline and assigned to OIG. Please touch base with the requester and provide him with an update on the requests or discuss further action.

Thanks..... Judith



Judith R. Lewis
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Senior Environmental Employment Program (SEE)
Office of General Counsel
National Freedom of Information Office
lewis.judith@epa.gov
202-566-1670

*“If life becomes hard, soften it
with random acts of kindness.”
Author.....Michael Levy*

From: admin@foiaonline.gov
To: [Levine, Scott](#)
Subject: FOIA Assignment for EPA-HQ-2019-001558
Date: Tuesday, November 20, 2018 7:41:39 AM

Your office has been assigned to the FOIA request - EPA-HQ-2019-001558. Additional details for this item are as follows:

- Tracking Number: EPA-HQ-2019-001558
- Requester: Michael Ravnitzky
- Request Track: Simple
- Submitted Date: 11/20/2018
- Due Date: 12/19/2018
- Short Description: N/A
- Description: Each report by the EPA Office of Inspector General concerning the closed investigation of (b) (6) during calendar year 2018.

From: [Levine, Scott](#)
To: (b) (6)
Subject: New FOIA requests: 2019-001256, 2019-001306, 2019-001558, 2019-001743, 2019-001744
Date: Friday, November 30, 2018 2:00:00 PM
Attachments: [CoverMemo - 2019-001306.pdf](#)
[CoverMemo - 2019-001744.pdf](#)
[CoverMemo - 2019-001743.pdf](#)
[CoverMemo - 2019-001558.pdf](#)
[CoverMemo - 2019-001256.pdf](#)

Hi (b) (6),

We have five new FOIA requests for which OI may have responsive records:

- **2019-001256:** This request is seeking records for an investigation of (b) (6).
- **2019-001306:** The monthly list of closed cases; this time for October.
- **2019-001558:** Request is seeking the closed investigation (b) (6), (b) (5) if one exists
- **2019-001743:** Requester provided a list of thirteen cases they are seeking the case closing/ROI for
- **2019-001744:** Request provided certain cases that appeared in the SAR for which they are seeking the case closing/ROI

Please let me know if you have any questions!

Thanks,
Scott

Scott Levine
Associate Counsel / OIG FOIA Coordinator
Office of Inspector General, Office of Counsel
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
levine.scott@epa.gov • (202) 566-0641

From: [Hanger, Eric](#)
To: [Levine, Scott](#)
Subject: RE: Awareness Notification
Date: Thursday, December 6, 2018 12:29:37 PM

Thanks, Scott. (b) (5) .

From: Levine, Scott
Sent: Thursday, December 6, 2018 11:46 AM
To: Shields, Edward <Shields.Ed@epa.gov>; Hanger, Eric <Hanger.Eric@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Awareness Notification

Ed and Eric,

To follow up -- I spoke with Larry Gottesman, the Agency FOIA officer, and he confirmed that the message regarding the Awareness Notification we received was in error and that the agency is not expecting us to participate in the process. I checked the FOIAonline system and the request in question has not been flagged, (b) (5) . I'll let you know if anything changes in the future.

Thanks,
Scott

From: Hanger, Eric
Sent: Tuesday, December 4, 2018 4:06 PM
To: Shields, Edward <Shields.Ed@epa.gov>; Levine, Scott <Levine.Scott@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Awareness Notification

(b) (5)
(b) (5)
(b) (5) Scott will get back directly with the HQ FOIA officer to tell him to take the
OIG out of the mix.
Eric

From: Shields, Edward
Sent: Tuesday, December 4, 2018 3:55 PM
To: Levine, Scott <Levine.Scott@epa.gov>
Cc: Hanger, Eric <Hanger.Eric@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Awareness Notification

Thanks Scott. Yes keep me in the loop and let me know about any success or hurdles we face with the Agency.

From: Levine, Scott
Sent: Tuesday, December 4, 2018 3:34 PM

To: Shields, Edward <Shields.Ed@epa.gov>
Cc: Hanger, Eric <Hanger.Eric@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Awareness Notification

Hi Ed,

I will follow up on this with Eric once I catch him (he's in a meeting at the moment), but we've consistently separated ourselves from the agency's "awareness process" for FOIA, and since we have our own FOIA authority, I will suggest we continue to do so to maintain independence. I can follow up with additional information and details at your request.

Scott

Scott Levine
Associate Counsel / OIG FOIA Coordinator
Office of Inspector General, Office of Counsel
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
levine.scott@epa.gov • (202) 566-0641

From: Person, Linda
Sent: Tuesday, December 4, 2018 3:03 PM
To: Shields, Edward <Shields.Ed@epa.gov>
Cc: Levine, Scott <Levine.Scott@epa.gov>; Gottesman, Larry <Gottesman.Larry@epa.gov>
Subject: Awareness Notification

(This is being sent on behalf of Larry Gottesman)

Dear Mr. Shields:

The following FOIA requests, assigned to your office, have been selected for the Awareness Notification Process set forth in the attached Chief of Staff's Memorandum.

The FOIAonline tracking number(s) for the selected FOIA requests is/are:

EPA-HQ-2019-001558

For these FOIA requests, please follow the procedures set out in the attached Chief of Staff's Memorandum. For steps 4 and 5, an email template is attached for your use.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Larry F. Gottesman
Agency FOIA Officer
Office of General Counsel
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

202-566-2162 (Direct line)

(b) (6) (Mobile)

202-566-1667 (Main line)

From: [Suggs, Vernon](#)
To: [Levine, Scott](#)
Subject: RE: FOIA close out: 2019-001558
Date: Thursday, November 19, 2020 1:16:12 PM

Done.

From: Levine, Scott <Levine.Scott@epa.gov>
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2020 12:02 PM
To: Suggs, Vernon <suggs.vernon@epa.gov>
Subject: FOIA close out: 2019-001558

Hi Vernon,

Request 2019-001558 is ready to be closed out. There should be an option for "Other" during the close out, and then a second drop down menu should appear. In the second drop down, please select "Glomar Response." Let me know if you don't see those options.

Thanks,
Scott

Scott Levine
Associate Counsel / OIG FOIA Coordinator
Office of Inspector General, Office of Counsel
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
levine.scott@epa.gov • (202) 566-0641

EPA-HQ-2019-001558 Request Details

Clock Days: 7

Case Phase: Assignment **Case Status:** Assignment Determination **Due Date:** 12/19/2018

Requester Information

Requester	Michael Ravnitzky
Organization	
Requester Has Account	No
Email Address	(b) (6)
Phone Number	(b) (6)
Fax Number	
Address	(b) (6)
City	(b) (6)
State/Province	(b) (6)
Zip Code/Postal Code	(b) (6)
Tracking Number	EPA-HQ-2019-001558
Submitted Date	11/20/2018
Received Date	11/20/2018
Perfected Date	11/20/2018
Last Assigned Date	11/20/2018
Assigned To	Office of the Inspector General
Last Assigned By	Wendy Schumacher (Headquarters)
Request Track	Simple
Fee Limit	\$25.00

Request Handling

Requester Info Available to the Public	Yes ▼
Request Track	Simple ▼
Fee Category	Other ▼
Fee Waiver Requested	No
Fee Waiver Status	
Expedited Processing Requested	No
Expedited Processing Status	
Request Type	FOIA ▼
Request Perfected	Yes ▼
★ Perfected Date	11/20/2018
Acknowledgement Sent Date	

Unusual Circumstances

No

Litigation

No

5 Day Notifications

Description

170/2000

Each report by the EPA Office of Inspector General concerning the closed investigation of (b) (6) during calendar year 2018.

Has Description Been Modified

Description Available to the Public

No

Short Description

Attached Supporting Files

Attachments Available to the Public

No

Attached File Name

Size (MB)

File Type

Remove

No supporting files have been uploaded.

Upload Supporting Files

No supporting files have been uploaded.

Drag files here

Upload Supporting Files



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

November 19, 2020

Mr. Michael Ravnitzky

(b) (6)

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request (EPA-2019-001558) – Final Disposition Letter

Dear Mr. Ravnitzky:

This letter responds to your Freedom of Information Act request to the Environmental Protection Agency Office of Inspector General dated November 20, 2018, seeking disclosure of “[e]ach report by the EPA Office of Inspector General concerning the closed investigation of [a named third-party individual], during calendar year 2018.”

Your request seeks information concerning a third party. With respect to the individual named in your FOIA request, pursuant to Exemptions 6 and 7(C) of the FOIA, the OIG can neither confirm nor deny the existence of records regarding an investigation. *See* 5 U.S.C. §552 (b)(6), (b)(7)(C). This response should not be taken as an indication that records exist; rather it is our standard response to requesters seeking information or records pertaining to third parties.

For your information, Congress excluded three discrete categories of law enforcement and national security records from the requirements of the FOIA. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 552(c) (2006 & Supp. IV 2010). This response is limited to those records that are subject to the requirements of the FOIA. This is a standard notification that is given to all our requesters and should not be taken as an indication that excluded records do, or do not, exist.

You may appeal this decision by email at oig_foia@epa.gov, or by mail to the Counsel to the Inspector General, Office of Counsel, Office of Inspector General, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Mail Code (2411T), Washington, D.C. 20460, or through FOIAonline if you are an account holder. The OIG will not consider appeals received after the 90-calendar-day limit. Appeals received after 5:00 p.m. EST will be considered received the next business day. The appeal letter should include the FOIA tracking number listed above. For quickest possible handling, the subject line of your email, the appeal letter, and its envelope, if applicable, should be marked “Freedom of Information Act Appeal.”

Additionally, you may seek dispute resolution services from either the EPA FOIA Public Liaison (hq.foia@epa.gov; 202-566-1667) or the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS). OGIS serves as a bridge between FOIA requesters and agencies and can be reached by email at ogis@nara.gov, by phone at 1-877-684-6448, or by fax at (202) 741-5769.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, you may contact me at (202) 566-1512 or oig_foia@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Scott Levine
Associate Counsel & OIG FOIA Officer